

Message Text

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45

ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5666

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

CINCEUR VAIHINGEN

CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN

CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG

C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 16251

MILITARY ADDEES FOR POLADS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS, UK, GW, PINT, PFOR, EEC

SUBJECT: FRG REACTION TO BRITISH ELECTION RESULTS

BEGIN SUMMARY: WORKING LEVEL OFFICERS IN THE GERMAN

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FOREIGN OFFICE APPEAR TO BE MILDLY ENCOURAGED BY THE

RESULTS OF THE BRITISH GENERAL ELECTION. IN THEIR VIEW, THE FACT THAT WILSON OBTAINED SUCH A SMALL MAJORITY WILL MAKE IT EASIER FOR HIM TO KEEP THE LEFT-WING ANTI-COMMON MARKETEERS IN LINE. THEY FEEL THAT FOREIGN MINISTER CALLAGHAN - DISCREETLY BACKED BY PRIME MINISTER WILSON - SINCERELY WANTS TO FIND A WAY OF REMAINING IN THE COMMON MARKET. END SUMMARY

1. ACCORDING TO THESE FOREIGN MINISTRY SOURCES, THE MAJOR PROBLEM IS TO ARRIVE AT CERTAIN "FACE-SAVING" DEVICES WHICH THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT CAN PRESENT TO THE ELECTORATE. SUCH DEVICES AS CALLING CURRENT OR ALREADY-PLANNED NEGOTIATIONS A "RE-NEGOTIATION" WOULD ENABLE THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO SAVE FACE AND CLAIM A VICTORY. EXAMPLES INCLUDE THE DISCUSSIONS OVER THE COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY AND THOSE WITH THE ASSOCIATED STATES. IT IS IN EVERYONE'S INTEREST TO KEEP BRITAIN IN THE COMMON MARKET, AND THERE IS CONSIDERABLE WILLINGNESS TO MAKE IT EASIER FOR BRITAIN TO DO SO. ON THE OTHER HAND, REAL CONCESSIONS TO BRITAIN ARE OUT OF THE QUESTION LEST OTHER MEMBERS SIMILARLY "BLACKMAIL" THE COMMUNITY INTO GIVING THEM SPECIAL BENEFITS.

2. OTHER THAN ITS EFFECTS ON BRITISH COMMON MARKET MEMBERSHIP, FRG INTEREST IN THE UK ELECTION CENTERS ON HOW THE RESULTS MIGHT AFFECT BRITAIN'S DEFENSE REVIEW. YET HERE THE FOREIGN OFFICE APPEARED SOMEWHAT UNCERTAIN THAT THE ELECTIONS HAD - OR COULD HAVE - CHANGED ANYTHING VERY MUCH. ANY BRITISH GOVERNMENT WOULD BE FACED WITH THE SAME HARSH ECONOMIC REALITIES WHICH SEEM TO DEMAND SUBSTANTIAL CUTS IN THE BRITISH DEFENSE EFFORT. IN POINT OF FACT, THE FRG IS ONLY MILDLY INTERESTED IN POSSIBLE CUTS ANYWHERE BUT IN THE BAOR. BRITAIN'S PROMISE TO CONSULT WITH THE FRG (AND THE U.S.) BEFORE FIRM DECISIONS ARE TAKEN IS SOMETHING WHICH THE FOREIGN OFFICE TAKES VERY SERIOUSLY.

3. THE BRITISH DESK OFFICER IN THE FOREIGN OFFICE COMMENTED THAT THE ELECTIONS HAD REINFORCED BRITAIN'S TWO-PARTY SYSTEM. HE SAID THE LIBERALS HAD MISSED
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THEIR "HISTORIC CHANCE" LAST FEBRUARY. NOR DID HE FEEL THAT THE RISE OF THE SCOTTISH AND WELSH NATIONALISTS NEGATED THIS JUDGMENT CONCERNING THE REINFORCEMENT OF THE TWO-PARTY SYSTEM. ON THE OTHER HAND, HE DID FIND IT NOTEWORTHY THAT THE SCOTTISH NATIONALS HAD REPLACED THE CONSERVATIVES AS THE NUMBER TWO PARTY IN SCOTLAND.

4. COMMENT: THOSE ISSUES AROUND WHICH THE BRITISH

ELECTION CENTERED - INFLATION, FUTURE NATIONALIZATIONS,
THE STATE OF THE ECONOMY - HARDLY SEEM TO CONCERN THE
FRG. LIKE MOST GOVERNMENTS, IT IS REALLY INTERESTED
ONLY IN WHAT EFFECTS A FOREIGN ELECTION MIGHT HAVE ON
ITSELF. THIS SOMEWHAT PAROCHIAL VIEW IS PARTICULARLY
PRONOUNCED IN THE EURO-CENTERED FRG.
HILLENBRAND

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